

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIMA 00235 110015Z

ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 0235

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, PE

SUBJECT: GOP DEPORTS PROMINENT VELASCO-ERA MILITARY/POLITICAL
LEADERS

REF: LIMA A-175

SUMMARY: ON JANUARY 8 THE GOP DEPORTED RETIRED GENERAL LEONIDAS RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA (ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL LEADERS OF THE VELASCO GOVERNMENT), RETIRED GENERAL ARTURO VALDEZ PALACIO (CLOSE ADVISOR TO FORMER PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO) AND TWO OTHER RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS. ALTHOUGH NO OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE HAS YET APPEARED, THE FOUR WERE PROBABLY DEPORTED FOR ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE RECENTLY FOUNDED REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST PARTY (PSR). THE PSR PURPORTS TO REPRESENT REVOLUTIONARY CONTINUITY AND ITS CHARGES THE MORALES BERMUDEZ REGIME WITH DISMANTLING REVOLUTIONARY REFORMS. THE ORGANIZATIONALLY ACTIVE PSR MAY WITHER NOW THAT THE RATHER CHARISMATIC "LEONIDAS" WHO HAD CONTINUING CONTACT WITH LEFT-LEANING MILITARY OFFICERS HAS BEEN DEPORTED. END SUMMARY

1. UNDER TIGHT AIRPORT SECURITY PROCEDURES, ON JANUARY 8 THE GOP DEPORTED RETIRED GENERAL LEONIDAS RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA, ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL VELASCO-ERA MILITARY/POLITICAL
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 LIMA 00235 110015Z

LEADERS; RETIRED GENERAL ARTURO VALDEZ PALACIO, FORMER DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY GROUP AND TOP CONFIDANT OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO; RETIRED ADMIRAL JORGE DELLEPIANE OCAMPO, VELASCO MINISTER OF INDUSTRY; AND RETIRED NAVY CAPTAIN MANUEL BENZA CHACON. THE GOP HAS YET TO GIVE OFFICIAL EXPLANATION FOR THE DEPORTATIONS. ALL BUT VALDES PALACIO, WHO

FLEW TO MEXICO CITY, WERE DEPORTED TO PANAMA.

2. THE FOUR DEPORTEES SIGNED THE NOVEMBER MANIFESTO OF THE PSR WHICH CALLS FOR "THE CONSTRUCTION OF PERUVIAN SOCIALISM" AS PROMISED BY THE GOP PRIOR TO MID-1976 POLITICAL CHANGES. IN ANSWER TO A SUBSEQUENT COMMENT BY INTERIOR MINISTER CISNEROS THAT THE PSR WAS A MARXIST-LENINIST GROUP REPRESENTING THOSE WHO "MISDIRECTED" THE VELASCO GOVERNMENT, RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA WROTE A LETTER TO EHT PRESS (PUBLISHED DECEMBER 28) ACCUSING THE MORALES BERMUDEZ REGIME OF "SYSTEMATICALLY DISMANTLING REVOLUTIONARY REFORMS", THEREBY ENSURING THE "CONSOLIDATION OF THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM". RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA SUGGESTED THAT WHILE THE ORIGINAL GOAL OF THE MORALES BERMUDEZ REGIME WAS TO "EXTEND THE REVOLUTION AND ESTABLISH PERUVIAN SOCIALISM", THE GOP WAS NOW ASSOCIATED WITH THE EFFORTS OF "IMPERIALISM AND THE OLIGARCHY".

3. COMMENT: WHEN A COMMUNIQUE ON THE DEPORTATIONS IS ISSUED, IT WILL PROBABLY CHARGE THE RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS WITH ILLEGAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY OR POSSIBLY SUBVERSION INCLUDING ACTIVITY DESIGNED TO UNDERMINE ARMED FORCES UNITY. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED RESULTS OF INCREASING PSR ACTIVITY ALLEGEDLY INCLUDING

THE RECRUITMENT OF FISHERMEN AND HIRED RUFFIANS FORMERLY ASSOCIATED WITH EX-FISHERIES MINISTER TANTALEAN. THE PSR HAD RECENTLY BEGUN A WALL PAINTING AND PROPAGANDA DISTRIBUTION EFFORT. THE PARTY HAD A READY-MADE
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PAGE 03 LIMA 00235 110015Z

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK BASED ON GOP-FOSTERED SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS WET UP WHEN RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA WAS SOCIAL MOBILIZATION (SINAMOS) SHIEF. THESE ORGANIZATIONS WERE FURTHER ENCOURAGED AND THEIR TIES TO RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA STRENGTHENED WHEN HE WAS SIMULTANEOUSLY MILITARY COMMANDER OF THE KEY SECOND REGION (LIMA) AND GOP INFORMATION CZAR. AFTER HIS FORCED RETIREMENT IN OCTOBER 1975 FOR ALLEGED COUP PLOTTING, RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA BECAME AN ADVISOR TO THE PEASANT FEDERATION, THE CNA. LEADERS OF THE CNA AS WELL AS THOSE FROM INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITIES (CONACI) AND THE FRONT FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE REVOLUTION (FDRP) ALL SIGNED ON WITH THE PSR. THE MOSCOW-LINE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP) AND SOME CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS INCLUDING CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC UNIONS WERE ALSO SAID TO BE SUPPORTING THE PSR.

4. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE PSR COULD HAVE GROWN INTO AN IMPORTANT ELECTORAL FORCE EVEN IN AN OPEN SYSTEM, BUT THE PSR HAD AND MAY STILL HAVE A CERTAIN DISRUPTIVE

POTENTIAL BOTH AMONG CIVILIANS AND WITHIN THE MILITARY. IT COULD SERVE AS A REMINDER OF THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE GOP HAS STRAYED FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY PATH AND IT WOULD CERTAINLY DISTORT GOP EFFORTS TO "TRANSFER" POWER TO CIVILIANS THROUGH INDIRECT ELECTIONS USING THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, A PROCEDURE TO WHICH PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ AT LEAST STILL SEEMS TO BE COMMITTED.

5. THE DEPORTATION OF THESE MILITARY LEADERS WHO ALONG WITH FORMER PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO ARE PERSONALLY IDENTIFIED WITH PROFOUND POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE 1968-1975 PERIOD, CLEARLY INDICATES THAT THE GOP HAS EMBARKED ON A PRAGMATIC PATH, INCREASINGLY DIVERGENT FROM THE ORIGINAL, WHICH WILL NOT LEAD TO THE SAME GOAL. THE PSR MAY NOT BE BANNED, BUT WITHOUT THE CHARISMATIC RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA AND THE CLEVER VALDES PALACIO (WITH THEIR LINKS TO THE MILITARY) IT IS UNLIKELY CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 LIMA 00235 110015Z

TO PROSPER. FERNANDEZ MALDONADO IS SAID TO HAVE BLESSED THE ORGANIZATION BUT HE HAS NOT SPOKEN OUT OR SIGNED UP. THE PCP MAY DECIDE THAT WITHOUT ITS MILITARY TIES, THE PSR IS JUST ANOTHER FRONT ORGANIZATION, NOT WORTH A MAJOR INVESTMENT. AND SO, LIKE THE FDRP AND OTHER POLITICAL GROUPS INSPIRED BY THE REVOLUTION, THE PSR MAY FIND THAT NONE CAN SURVIVE WHEN FACED WITH GOP REJECTION. DEAN

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